

A2 TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024 THE PATRIOT-NEWS

LOCAL&STATE

SOCIAL MEDIA

Far from England, Harrisburg expert on royal family informs 1.5M followers



Amanda Matta, a central Pennsylvania native, has gained more than 1.5 million followers on TikTok with her posts about the royal family. Photos by Jimmie Brown, PennLive

She's built a community of fellow royal enthusiasts while turning the project into her full-time job.



Items collected by Matta regarding the royal family.

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The fascination with the royal family stretches across the pond and well into the U.S. For Harrisburg digital content creator Amanda Matta, that fascination has turned into a career.

Matta, an Elizabethtown native, produces social media content dedicated to the lives of England's royals. In just three years, she has gained more than 1.5 million followers on TikTok and built a community of fellow royal enthusiasts.

Matta was introduced to the royal family by her mother, an avid Princess Diana fan. "She actually had this book of Princess Diana paper dolls, which I cut up and played with all the time," Matta said. "Now I know I probably wasn't supposed to do that because they were commemorative, but that's where it all started."

The influencer says that she and her mom watched Prince William and Kate Middleton's wedding in 2011, and through those experiences, her "interest in history and art grew."

"There's a royal component to a lot of art history because these royals were paying for these paintings," she said.

From there, her passion continued

to grow, as she received her bachelor's degree from Juniata College in art history and museum studies. More recently, she received her master's at Drexel University in art administration and museum leadership. After college, Matta worked at the Whitaker Center before making a career change a few years later.

Matta started her content creation journey in late 2021 and has grown over the past three years.

"It was a complete accident but my views and follower count grew almost immediately," she said. "My first video got about three million views, and then I jumped to 10,000 followers and it continued to grow from there."

After her first TikTok was posted, Matta soon discovered the negative side of content creation: mean comments and invasive fan behavior.

At the time, Matta commented, "A lot of the hate towards Meghan Markle is racist." Many followers of the royals began to harass Matta following that, and soon discovered where she worked, along with other personal information about her.

Not wanting to cause any more issues with her museum job, Matta decided it was best to leave and worked on figuring out

her next move.

"Coming to terms with that was tough, but I'm two years on from that and that's what made me decide how valuable these conversations are," Matta said. "If they're going to make people that angry and upset and to threaten my livelihood and talk about my family, I felt like I had two choices: Back down entirely and just stop, but something in that situation was sort of screaming to me, 'No this is important and you're hitting a nerve. If you're confident in what you're doing, keep doing it. Be smart about it, but keep doing it,'" Matta said.

Since then, Matta has continued to grow her following, allowing her to make content creation a full-time career. She carries a full workload in the social landscape as she manages her TikTok, Instagram, Substack and Patreon, and she co-hosts an art history podcast called "Art of History." She does all of the work on her own, including managing her brand and sponsorships.

Over the years, the uncertainty has proven to be challenging, Matta said. It took Matta a long time to go all in on social media because it is always changing. However, she enjoys the creative aspects of the job, along with using her education to continue important conversations regarding the royals.

With constant discourse about all of the royal family, Matta has liked being a positive voice in these discussions, while being able to use her extensive knowledge of arts and history to provide a more informed perspective.

"I like where I am now and the lens I can provide," she said. "My history background allows me to disseminate information, and my museum background helps too. I was writing lesson plans and I was a STEM educator before pivoting to this full time. Distributing information, giving context and walking people through something is always something that I've kind of taken to."